

team and should be in the Senate Hall of Fame for the good work he has done over these many years.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

PROPOSED EXECUTIVE ACTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I would like to say a few words this morning about President Obama's proposed Executive action on immigration. I will begin with a quote from the President himself. "Democracy is hard," he said during a commencement speech in Miami 3 years ago. "But it's right. [And] changing our laws means doing the hard work of changing minds and changing votes, one by one."

As somebody who well understands just how difficult the work of changing minds and votes can be, I could not agree more with the President's statement. Americans accept that democracy's blessings are only made possible by the constraints it imposes—both its legal contours and those imposed by popular elections.

We accept democracy's messiness. We accept that we may not always get all of what we want exactly when we want it. Based on more of what the President said in Miami, this is something he seemed to understand as well. He was talking about immigration that day.

Here is something else he said on that topic. "I know [that] some . . . wish that I could just bypass Congress and change the law myself. But that's not how democracy works." Indeed, it is not—all of which makes the President's planned Executive action on immigration even more jarring.

If the President truly follows through on this attempt to impose his will unilaterally, he will have issued a rebuke to his own stated view of democracy. He will have contradicted his past statements on this very issue. The instances of President Obama saying that he does not have the power to do the kinds of things he now plans to do are almost too numerous to list.

He tried to suggest otherwise last weekend. But a prominent fact checker panned the spin as "Pinocchio-laden" and clarified that the President has been asked specifically about the source of actions that he is contemplating now. The President's previous answers seemed to be unequivocal: He lacked the legal authority to act, according to the President himself.

As one example, President Obama said last year that Executive action was "not an option," because "[he] would be ignoring the law. 'There is a path to get this done,' he said, 'and that is through Congress.'" He is right. The action he has proposed would ignore the law, would reject the voice of the voters, and would impose new unfairness on law-abiding immigrants, all without solving the problem.

In fact, his action is more likely to make it even worse. We have already seen the consequences of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, his most recent action in this area. It was a factor in encouraging young people to risk their lives on a perilous journey some would never have even contemplated and some would never complete.

The effect of this action could be just as tragic. Just as the Affordable Care Act had little to do with making health care more affordable, slapping the term "immigration reform" on something does not make it actually immigration reform. Just as with ObamaCare, the action the President is proposing is not about solutions, it is not about compassion, it seems to be about what a political party thinks would make for good politics.

It seems to be about what the President thinks would be good for his legacy. Those are not the motivations that should be driving such sweeping action, and I think the President will come to regret the chapter history writes if he does move forward because the plan he is presenting is more than just—as the President himself has acknowledged—an overreach, it is also unfair. What does the President have to say to the countless aspiring immigrants who spent literally years waiting patiently in line, to the people who played by all the rules? Where is his compassion for them? What does the President have to say to the millions of Americans who still can't find work in this economy? The President can't reach across the aisle to secure a serious jobs plan for them, but he is willing to put everything he has into one Executive action? Where is the justice?

There is a larger point too. Some people seem to have forgotten this already, but we just had an election. Before that election the President told us about his plan to act unilaterally on immigration. He reminded us that his policies were on the ballot. And then the people spoke. The President doesn't have to like the result, but he has a duty to respect it. The American people clearly sent a message. Nobody missed it. They said they want to see

us working together. They said they want to see more serious ideas pass through Congress. What they didn't say they wanted to see was the President sidestepping the very representatives they just elected. That is why so many Kentuckians have been calling my office in opposition to this plan. I know phones have continued to ring off the hook all week in our offices across Capitol Hill. Our constituents want to be heard. President Obama needs to listen to their voices.

If nothing else, perhaps the President will at least consider the views of Democratic Senators and Members of Congress who have urged him not to do this. These Democrats understand the consequences of a President from a different political party citing this precedent in the future.

Either way, he needs to understand something: If President Obama acts in defiance of the people and imposes his will on the country, Congress will act. We are considering a variety of options, but make no mistake—when the newly elected representatives of the people take their seats, they will act.

Look, as the President has said, democracy is hard. Imposing his will unilaterally may seem tempting. It may serve him politically in the short term. But he knows it will make an already broken system even more broken, and he knows this is not how democracy is supposed to work because he told us so himself.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 2 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Maryland.

TRAGIC SYNAGOGUE SLAYINGS

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I know I express the sentiments and outrage of every Member of this body about the tragic events in Israel this past Tuesday where those in a synagogue were brutally slain. It was a shock to all of us—in a synagogue, in a place of worship, people there praying and studying, and their lives were brutally ended.

Let me just mention the victims. Rabbi Moshe Twersky, Rabbi Aryeh Kupinsky, Rabbi Kalman Levine, Avraham Goldberg, and Zidan Saif, a police officer.

I particularly want to mention Rabbi Kupinsky because there is a connection